



The Later Thresher

#### DAD'S THRASHERS

Dad operated the horse-driven grain "thrashers" propelled by five or six teams hitched to a round revolving thread-wheel to give power to the operation of the belts of the threshing machine — which chopped up the bundles of wheat and let the kernels drop to a large shaking "pan" that sent the grains to the hopper. The chaff and the straw were handled by a revolving lift that transferred the straw upwards where it fell to the ground. The "forkers" then threw the straw into the stack pile, and the "sackers" filled the wheat into bags which were sent to the granary for storage.

The gala event of farm life was "The threshers are coming." The best cooking of meats, chickens, and good things to eat were prepared days ahead, and friends and neighbors, and "young-uns" were all on deck ready to eat and "jubilate." The Irish have their "wakes"; the Germans their "hop-picking"; the Jews their "christening"; but the Sanpeter had the "thrashers".

Many years later when tractors came into use the power-driven thresher came to the big wheat or oats stack to convert the long bundles into straw and kernels of golden grain. The process of threshing was the same, except the great cleated wheels of the smoking steam engine to the accompaniment of groaning gears, squeaking wheels, the flapping and slapping of the long wide leather power belt, made eventful the grand old way of getting cereal crops for use and market. It was a tremendous happening, and yet the same eclat, "the threshers are here!"

#### "PEPETUAL MOTION"—MODERN BALL BEARINGS

At Christenburg a few miles north on the San Pitch River, Martin Peterson placed a Homestead Entry. He built shacks along the canal. Dad had constructed from the Gunnison Reservoir to take water to his Antelope Ranch.

Peterson manipulated waterfalls and various contraptions to test his invention "perpetual motion" theory. This device he added to wheels to obviate friction which later came to be known as the ball bearing. Peterson was trained in Copenhagen and after years of patient trial's

and failures was dubbed "Perpetual Motion Peterson", but he was insistent that wheels could be set in motion with his device and could without friction, or getting hot, operate and propel weights smoothly and could continue endlessly in motion.

Peterson was so insistent and so sure that his invention would work that he induced Dad to provide the means of his going to Washington, D. C. to patent his discovery. He remained in Washington D.C. for a few years but his "perpetual motion" was taken over by crafty manipulators and became *others* modern ball bearings in wheel locomotion.